



Career Ladder Program Guidance

School Year 2026-27

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Revision History

Date of Change	Section/Heading	Page Number
3/15/2024	2024-25 Guidance	Entire Content
4/1/2024	Removed references to ePeGS budget revisions, payment requests, and Final Expenditure Reports (FERs)	Entire Content
5/29/2024	Removed references to ePeGS as a part of Key Dates and clarified in Appendix E that school districts will not submit an ePeGS budget.	Pgs. 8 and 17
8/20/2024	Removed the remaining references to ePeGS. Revised guidance to incorporate language from Senate Bill 727 and the Career Ladder statute (168.500 RSMo) which goes into effect August 28, 2024.	Entire Content
9/16/2024	Revised guidance to incorporate language from Senate Bill 727 and the Career Ladder statute (168.500 RSMo) into Appendix A, Model DCLP.	Pages 14-15
2/28/2025	Revised guidance to incorporate language from Senate Bill 727 and the Career Ladder statute (168.500 RSMo) into Appendix A, Model DCLP.	Pages 1
9/18/2025	Removed language regarding administration course requirements in Appendix D. Revised language regarding additional teacher training coursework. Revised the Financial Information contact to Amber Riley.	Pages 9-10, 13, 17-18, and 21-22
2/20/2026	Revised guidance to clarify qualified hours. Revised guidance to clarify reporting timelines. Revised guidance to add additional information of components Revised guidance to clarify mentoring requirements. Revised to clarify patron definition and add due date requirement to DCLP. Revised chart in Appendix B for clarity and readability.	Page 4 Page 4 Page 5 Page 6 Page 7 , Page 8 Page 19

Introduction: Career Ladder

The Missouri Career Development and Teacher Excellence Plan (Career Ladder Program) is a voluntary performance pay matching program established by statute. The General Assembly makes an annual appropriation for the purpose of providing the state's share of the Career Ladder Program. The Career Ladder rule (5 CSR 20-400.370) sets forth guidelines for local district participation in the Career Ladder Program.

As part of the fiscal year state budget, qualifying school districts can apply for grant funds to provide career pay which shall be a salary supplement for eligible teachers. This career pay shall be administered consistent with the provisions set forth in [Sections 168.500 – 168.515, RSMo.](#)

The Career Ladder Grant Program supports salary supplements for teaching staff to provide compensation for additional responsibilities and voluntary efforts performed for which a teacher does not already receive some type of compensation. As stated in the Career Ladder statute (168.500 RSMo), such additional responsibilities and volunteer efforts should be outside of the duties that require a teaching certificate under section 168.021 RSMo, or other such professional certificate or license. Duties that require a professional certificate include typical teaching and other professional duties inclusive of the professional contract. All other responsibilities and duties that do not require a teaching certificate but obviously contribute to the improvement of programming and services for students are eligible to be counted towards Career Ladder Hours. The career advancement program is a matching fund program. Up to 60 percent of the additional salary supplement shall come from state grant funds, and the remaining amount not less than 40 percent and any related benefit costs coming from local sources. This grant is subject to appropriation on an annual basis.

Eligible LEAs

All public school districts are eligible to apply for this grant program. Charter schools are not included under the language of the statute. This is an optional grant program. This grant program is subject to annual appropriation.

Eligible Staff

All full-time certified educators who have completed at least two years of public school experience are eligible, except for any member of the Armed Forces of the United States or their spouse who has teaching experience in another state and has transferred to Missouri. They must also be reported in the MOSIS October Cycle Educator submission as a classroom teacher (60 code), librarian/media (40 code), a school counselor (50 code), or a certificated teacher who holds positions as a school psychological examiner, parents as teachers educators, school psychologists, special education diagnosticians (70 code), or speech pathologists (90 code). To be eligible, the teacher must also be paid on the district salary schedule. Changes in participating staff after approval of the application is allowed provided it does not exceed the state's annual appropriation for Career Ladder. Participating teachers are reported as a part of the Core Data October Cycle submission and again by the final Resubmission Date (see chart of page 14).

Eligible Costs

School districts will be eligible to request up to 60 percent of the total supplemental salary amount consistent

with the professional responsibilities and/or voluntary efforts required of each teacher at each step or stage of career advancement. The school district may establish a salary supplement up to but may not exceed fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500) for Career Stage I teachers, three thousand dollars (\$3,000) for Career Stage II teachers, and five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for Career Stage III teachers.

Grant Proration Provision

Should the total approved applications exceed available appropriations, a proration of the grant amount may be necessary. If proration of the grant is necessary, school districts will have the option to withdraw their grant application or amend their plan to use reduced amounts at each stage.

District Career Ladder Plan (DCLP)

Each local school district desiring to participate in the Career Ladder Grant Program shall develop and submit to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (department) a District Career Ladder Plan (DCLP). A model DCLP, with the eight required components, is provided in Appendix A. The DCLP must include the eight required components and provides the organizational basis and required assurances for the district's career ladder program. The development of a career ladder plan and participation in the Career Ladder Grant Program is voluntary for local school districts. When districts establish their career ladder plans, they must also accept the responsibility for supplying the local portion of the funding, which is a 40% local match. Teachers who clearly meet the qualifications and responsibilities established as specific criteria (Section 168.500.2(3), RSMo) for the district Career Ladder shall have a reasonable expectation of participating on the career ladder. A summary of the qualifications, responsibilities, and volunteer efforts are provided in Appendix B.

The DCLP shall contain a statement requiring that all criteria used for awarding payment be directly and obviously related to the improvement of programs and services for students as outlined in the District School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, Missouri School Improvement Program, or instructional improvement plan.

The DCLP shall contain three (3) stages and the qualifications for each stage. The annual supplemental pay shall not exceed:

- \$1,500 for Stage I
- \$3,000 for Stage II
- \$5,000 for Stage III.

A school district may elect to pay less for each stage but may not exceed the maximum amounts as specified above. This decision must be noted in the DCLP. The state's payment to the school district is contingent upon appropriations for this purpose (Section 168.515.1, RSMo). This supplemental pay shall be in addition to that which the teacher would normally be accorded by the district's salary schedule (Section 168.505.1, RSMo).

Each career ladder stage shall contain specific qualifications for the teacher prior to application (Section 168.500.2, RSMo). These qualifications shall include:

- Appropriate requirements and years of teaching experience in Missouri public schools for each stage (Section 168.500.2(5), RSMo), except for any member of the Armed Forces of the United States or

their spouse who has teaching experience in another state and has transferred to Missouri.

- At Stage I, the teacher shall have completed two (2) years of teaching experience in a Missouri public school(s), have completed the required beginning teacher assistance program, and participated in two (2) years of mentoring. The mentoring and beginning teacher assistance program do not apply to any teacher with prior teaching experience or to those in a position where this is not required. (Section 168.400.4, RSMo)
 - At Stage II, the teacher shall have completed three (3) years of teaching experience in a Missouri public school(s), have completed the required beginning teacher assistance program, and participated in two (2) years of mentoring. The mentoring and beginning teacher assistance program do not apply to any teacher with prior teaching experience or to those in a position where this is not required. (Section 168.400.4, RSMo)
 - At Stage III, the teacher shall have completed five (5) years of teaching experience in a Missouri public school(s), have completed the required beginning teacher assistance program, and participated in two (2) years of mentoring. The mentoring and beginning teacher assistance program do not apply to any teacher with prior teaching experience or to those in a position where this is not required. (Section 168.400.4, RSMo)
- A school district may elect to initially place teachers with more experience at lower stages, as long as it meets the minimum years of experience as specified above. This decision must be noted in the DCLP.
- A clearly defined level of acceptable performance as determined by the district's performance-based teacher evaluation process. The district's evaluation process must be fully aligned to the Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation (5 CSR 20-400.375).
- Professional certification in a subject area for each participating teacher.
- Full-time regular length contract.
- A Career Ladder Development Plan is created by the teacher and submitted for approval. A sample model plan is available in Appendix C. The Career Ladder Development Plan shall contain a minimum of clock hours to be spent on approved responsibilities or volunteer efforts. A school district may elect to require more clock hours, but must at a minimum meet the required clock hours per stage. A school district may also allow a teacher on Stage III to be paid for Stage II or a teacher on Stage II to be paid for Stage I if the teacher is unable to complete the necessary hours. This decision must be noted in the DCLP and must, at a minimum, meet the required clock hours per stage as follows:
 - At Stage I the teacher completes a minimum of fifty (50) clock hours
 - At Stage II the teacher completes a minimum of seventy-five (75) clock hours
 - At Stage III the teacher completes a minimum of one hundred (100) clock hours
- Each career ladder stage shall contain responsibilities commensurate to the compensation offered for each stage that will be completed by the teacher while on the career ladder. These responsibilities shall directly and obviously relate to the improvement of programs and services for students as outlined in the District School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, Missouri School Improvement Program, or instructional improvement plan. Responsibilities shall be detailed in the teacher's Career Ladder Development Plan. A list of inappropriate activities is provided in Appendix D. As stated in the Career Ladder statute (168.500 RSMo), such additional responsibilities and volunteer efforts should be outside of the duties that require a teaching certificate under section 168.021 RSMo, or other such professional certificate or license. Duties that require a professional certificate include typical teaching and other professional duties inclusive of the professional contract. Additional responsibilities and volunteer efforts may be completed from May 1 of the current

year through May 31 of the next school year. These responsibilities and volunteer efforts may include but not be limited to:

- Participating in teacher externships as provided in Section 168.025, RSMo;
 - Serving as a coach, supervisor, or organizer of any extracurricular activities for which the teacher is not already receiving compensation;
 - Serving as a mentor or cooperating teacher for new teachers for which the teacher is not already receiving compensation;
 - Serving as a mentor for students or teachers, whether in a formal or informal capacity;
 - Providing high-quality tutoring or additional learning opportunities to students;
 - Assisting students with postsecondary education preparation including, but not limited to, teaching an American College Testing (ACT) or Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) preparation course or assisting students with completing college or career school admission or financial assistance applications;
 - Receiving additional teacher training, coursework (recommended: 1 credit hour of coursework = 15 Career Ladder hours), or certification outside of that offered by the school district (i.e. National Board Certification); or
 - Other (the responsibility or voluntary effort should directly and obviously relate to improved programs and services for students as outlined in the District School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, Missouri School Improvement Program, or instructional improvement and is an additional responsibility or voluntary effort extending beyond or in addition to those duties that require a teaching certificate).
- The DCLP may contain additional qualifications deemed appropriate by the local board of education to the extent they are consistent with the provisions of Sections 168.500—168.515, RSMo.
 - The local school district shall show evidence of teacher, administrator, and patron involvement in the development of the DCLP. The patron should be someone who is not a staff member of the district. This may include a parent, board member, or community member among others.
 - The DCLP shall contain provisions for the assessment of the district's career ladder. This should include regular assessment of the district's career ladder under the direction of the local board of education with assistance from administrators, teachers, and patrons. Criteria for assessment shall include, but not be limited to, benefits for schools and students, and teacher interest and participation. In addition, school districts will annually report data on their Career Ladder Grant Program to the department when requested.
 - The DCLP shall contain procedures for appealing decisions made regarding approval or denial of application and placement on the career ladder (Section 168.500.2(6), RSMo), including the right to substantive and procedural appeals of the local comprehensive and performance-based evaluation process. Procedures shall include, but not necessarily be limited to the following:
 - An opportunity to have the decision reviewed by the superintendent of schools; and
 - An opportunity for the local board of education to review the superintendent's decision.
 - Appeal procedures shall be implemented in a timely fashion. All decisions made with respect to a teacher's application to, and placement on, any stage of the career ladder shall be based on the qualifications for that stage as stated in the DCLP.
 - The DCLP shall contain provisions for recognition of teacher mobility from one (1) district to another within this state (Section 168.500.5, RSMo).

DCLP Approval

The department will review and approve local district plans and will annually collect data through an annual survey from local school districts regarding their career ladder process to be used in an annual Career Ladder Report. School districts participating in the Career Ladder Program and accepting state funds must contribute data to the annual Career Ladder Report. The information requested by the department may include but not be limited to:

- a. Total number of teachers participating at each stage
- b. Total local contribution
- c. Total hours of teacher participation in each of these categories:
 - Participating in teacher externships as provided in Section 168.025, RSMo;
 - Serving as a coach, supervisor, or organizer of any extracurricular activities for which the teacher is not already receiving compensation;
 - Serving as a mentor or cooperating teacher for new teachers for which the teacher is not already receiving compensation;
 - Serving as a mentor for students or teachers, whether in a formal or informal capacity;
 - Providing high-quality tutoring or additional learning opportunities to students;
 - Assisting students with postsecondary education preparation including, but not limited to, teaching an ACT or SAT preparation course or assisting students with completing college or career school admission or financial assistance applications;
 - Receiving additional teacher training, coursework (recommended: 1 credit hour of coursework = 15 Career Ladder hours), or certification outside of that offered by the school district (i.e. National Board Certification); and
 - Other (with a description of how this responsibility or voluntary effort directly and obviously relates to the improvement of programs and services for students as outlined in the District School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, Missouri School Improvement Program, or instructional improvement).
- d. Overall annual retention rates of participating teachers, as well as overall district teacher retention. This date is used to determine the impact of the Career Ladder Program on improving teacher retention in Missouri.

In each year of participation in Career Ladder, the local school district must submit to the department by April 30 any revisions or amendments to an approved DCLP, adopted by the local board of education, or would submit a new DCLP adopted by the local board for initial approval. Applications to participate in the Career Ladder Program must include a current date of approval by the local board of education. The revised or amended DCLP must include revised due dates. This may include a projected date of approval by the local board of education if the meeting date of the local board occurs after the due date of the Career Ladder application.

Upon receipt of the school district's career ladder application, the department will review plans for eligibility to participate in the program. The department will evaluate the local district's career ladder plan to determine compliance with applicable statutes and standards and procedures as described in the eight required components established in the Model District Career Ladder Plan (Appendix A). The department will notify school districts of necessary modifications, eligibility, or denial.

Each eligible district shall identify participating teachers through the Core Data/MOSIS Collection System

provided by the department. Upon receipt of the Core Data information, the department will review the list of participating teachers and calculate the state portion of the career ladder salary supplement. In April of each year, the department will ask the district to confirm that the Core Data/MOSIS data is up to date and accurate. The department will schedule the appropriate reimbursement for Career Ladder Stages I, II, and III payments to occur in June, in concert with the regular payment of foundation program funds.

Payments to Staff

Eligible districts receiving career ladder salary supplements shall pay each teacher an amount consistent with their approved Stage as specified in the district application, not to exceed the amounts provided by Section 168.515(1), RSMo. Payments to all teachers in Stages I, II, and III will occur no later than June 30, upon the completion of their Career Ladder Plan. If staffing/eligibility changes, the department shall be notified of the changes and will make an offsetting correction on the ensuing payment.

Federally Funded Positions

This grant program requires a local match of 40 percent for any additional salary provided by the grant. For positions otherwise funded by a federal program for the base salary, local funds must be used to match the state funds provided by the grant to supplement salaries based on the qualifications and responsibilities of each stage. Federal funds may not be used for the grant salary matching funds. This is true for positions funded discretely by federal funds (e.g. Title I) and for situations where Title I is implemented using a School-wide Pool model.

MOSIS/Core Data Reporting

Career Ladder Program information is reported in the MOSIS and Core Data collection systems. The following is a list of the Core Data screens and MOSIS files pertaining to the program.

- Core Data Screen 02 (August Cycle) includes four fields:
 - A dropdown indicating the district's participation in the program, and
 - Steps 1-3, indicating the supplemental pay for each step of the program.
- Core Data Screen 03 (August Cycle) includes a field to collect the specific program contact personnel at the district.
- Core Data Screen 18 (October Cycle) displays the Career Ladder Step and Supplement Amount for participating educators.
 - The Career Ladder Step on Screen 18 is populated from the Career Ladder Stage field reported in the MOSIS October Educator file.

The Career Ladder Supplement on Screen 18 corresponds to the supplement amount reported on Screen 02.

Future Considerations

This grant program is subject to annual appropriations. The status of this grant program for the FY 27 budget will not be finalized until the state budget is signed by the Governor in June 2026. Moving forward, school districts are strongly encouraged to implement language in their DLCP related to the contingent nature of this funding stream.

Application Process

To apply for the Career Ladder Grant Program, school districts will create and submit a new or revised DCLP through the department's Web Application, Compliance Plans. Revised or amended DCLPs are submitted through Compliance Plans as well. The submission of the DCLP must include a current plan date, revised due dates, and a current approval date by the local board of education. The eight required components of the DCLP are outlined in Appendix A and the required elements in Compliance Plans are outlined in Appendix F. DESE will make automatic payments based on MOSIS data. Allocations will be posted.

As part of the application process, school districts agree to the following assurances:

- The school district assures that the data submitted in the application is accurate at the time of submission.
- If approved the school district will comply with applicable statutes, regulations, and program rules.
- If approved the school district will pay each teacher the appropriate supplemental amount as determined for each stage, including providing 40 percent local matching funds. If proration is necessary, the school district will have the opportunity to withdraw from the grant program.
- The school district understands that the Career Ladder Grant Program is an annual program, subject to appropriation and withholding.
- The school district assures that it will only request Career Ladder funds based on approved qualifications, responsibilities, and volunteer efforts by eligible staff.
- The school district assures that it will meet the minimum salary requirements under Section 163.172, RSMo. without using the Career Ladder Grant Program.
- The Career Ladder Plan for the district has current approval by the local board of education before submission and the date of approval has been provided.

School districts will need to submit the following information in the Application for Approval of the District Career Ladder Plan through Compliance Plans (see Appendix F):

- Number of teachers at each stage
- Confirmation of funding amount at each stage; or
- Confirmation of funding amount if different than allowed by law
- Upload the current District Career Ladder Plan
- Date of District Board of Education approval (actual or projected)
- Email address for the person to receive status change notifications

Staff Updates

Staffing changes may occur during the school year that involve teachers eligible for the Career Ladder Program. Districts must update their MOSIS/Core Data Career Ladder salary entries no later than April 12, 2027 for any teachers who are not on track to meet their Career Ladder plan by May 31, 2027. Changes in participating staff after approval of the application is allowed provided it does not exceed the state's annual appropriation for Career Ladder.

Finance Coding

Function Codes	6100 Certificated Salaries
1000 Instruction	
2000 Support Services	
3000 Community Services	

The coding of Career Ladder should align with those provided in the [Missouri Financial Accounting Manual](#). The revenue and project codes associated with the Teacher Baseline Salary Grant are:

Grant	Revenue Code
Career Ladder Grant Program	5317

Project Codes	Project Code	Source Code
Career Ladder Grant Program State Funds	31700	3
Career Ladder Grant Program Local Match	14317	1, 2

Expenditures for Career Ladder duties should be coded to the most appropriate function code for the majority of duties being performed, which may differ from the function code used to record the employee's normal salary.

The location code for the building where those duties are being performed should be used even if that is different from the employee's normal location code tied to their regular salary.

Each employee's career ladder payment will include two entries. A state and local portion, with the state portion tied to the Project Code 31700 and Source Code of 3 and the local portion tied to the Project Code 14317 and Source Code of 1 or 2, resulting in two separate entries for their Career Ladder salary payment.

Questions regarding retirement withholdings on Career Ladder salary should be addressed to the Public School Retirement System (PSRS). Other benefit withholdings may follow the coding of the additional salary payments.

State Reimbursement Payment Procedures

Eligible districts receiving career ladder salary supplements shall pay each teacher an amount specified in the district application and not to exceed the amounts provided by Section 168.515(1), RSMo. Payments to all teachers in Stages I, II and III shall occur no later than June.

Districts will receive state reimbursement in June, in concert with the regular payment of foundation program funds, contingent upon appropriations. DESE will automatically issue payment in June and the amount will be based on the data reported in MOSIS. There are no EPeGs requirements for this grant. Districts do not need to complete a budget application or Final Expenditure Request (FER) in ePeGs to receive payment.

Key Dates and Contact Information

Activity	Date
Application Opens	April 1, 2026
Applications Due	April 30, 2026
MOSIS Educator Submission Due	October 31, 2026
MOSIS Educator Final Resubmission	April 12, 2027

Topic	Contact	Email	Phone
General Grant Information	Paul Katnik, Assistant Commissioner	Paul.Katnik@dese.mo.gov	573-751-2931
Financial Information for payment and coding questions.	Amber Riley, Coordinator	Amber.Riley@dese.mo.gov	573-751-6653
MOSIS/Core Data, any other questions related to MOSIS/Core Data	Amber Castleman, Coordinator	coredata-mosis@dese.mo.gov	573-526-2572

Appendix A: Model DCLP

Each local school district desiring to participate in the Career Ladder Grant Program shall develop and submit to the department a District Career Ladder Plan (DCLP). This plan has eight required components and provides the organizational basis and required assurances for the district's career ladder program.

- I. **The DCLP shall contain a statement that the teacher's Career Development Plan directly and obviously relates to the improvement of programs and services for students as outlined in the District School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, Missouri School Improvement Program, or instructional improvement plan in the district.**

The XYZ School District is committed to providing a successful educational experience for all students. Educational excellence is dependent largely on the skill, talent, and dedication of educators. The purpose of the Career Ladder Program is to enhance the educational experience of students by recognizing and rewarding productive, effective educators. The XYZ School District has developed a School Improvement Plan, a Curriculum Development Plan, and a Professional Development Plan and participates in the Missouri School Improvement Program in order to facilitate and improve the educational experience for all students. All Career Ladder responsibilities will be academic in nature and shall directly and obviously relate to the improvement of programs and services for students as outlined in the XYZ School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, the Missouri School Improvement Program, or other instructional improvement plan in the XYZ School District. The teacher's Career Development Plan (CDP) will associate each Career Ladder responsibility or volunteer effort with either a designated plan or other instructional improvements.

- II. **The DCLP shall contain no more than three stages, the required hours of responsibilities or volunteer efforts for each stage, and the maximum pay amount. A school district may elect to pay an amount less than the maximum allowable at each stage. The annual supplemental pay shall not exceed:**
 - a. **Stage I – requires 50 hours for a maximum amount of \$1,500**
 - b. **Stage II – requires 75 hours for a maximum amount of \$3,000**
 - c. **Stage III – requires 100 hours for a maximum amount of \$5,000**

The state's payment is contingent upon appropriations for this purpose. This supplemental pay shall be in addition to that which the teacher would normally be accorded by the district's salary schedule.

The XYZ School District shall assign qualified, participating teachers to the appropriate stage and award teachers supplemental pay in an amount to be specified annually and not to exceed \$1,500 for Stage I, \$3,000 for Stage II, or \$5,000 for Stage III. This supplemental pay shall be in addition to the salary normally accorded to the teacher by the district's salary schedule.

III. The DCLP clearly states that eligible school district educators shall meet the following qualifications prior to participation:

Eligible educators in Stage I of the XYZ School District shall:

- a. Completed two (2) years of teaching experience in Missouri public schools, except for any member of the Armed Forces of the United States or their spouse who has teaching experience in another state and has transferred to Missouri.
- b. Completed the required beginning teacher assistance program and participated in two (2) years of mentoring (Section 168.400.4, RSMo) The mentoring and beginning teacher assistance program do not apply to any teacher with prior teaching experience or to those in a position where this is not required.
- c. Performed at an acceptable level or above on all criteria on the most recent final evaluation instrument of the performance-based teacher evaluation process. The local evaluation process must be fully aligned with the Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation (5 CSR 20-400.375).
- d. Be serving on not less than a regular length full-time contract.
- e. Professional certification in a subject area for each participating teacher.
- f. Develop a Career Development Plan (CDP) that contains responsibilities or volunteer efforts that the educator will complete to receive his/her Career Ladder supplemental pay. The educator will complete one or more responsibilities or volunteer efforts by May 31, 2027. The district shall ensure that a minimum of fifty (50) clock hours are completed for Stage I, and that these hours be completed outside of the duties that require a teaching certificate under section 168.021 RSMo. This requirement should coincide with the standard* and be commensurate and adjustable to the compensation offered for Stage I. The educator shall relate each responsibility to an identified plan or other instructional improvement.

Eligible educators in Stage II of the XYZ School District shall:

- a. Completed three (3) years of teaching experience in Missouri public schools, except for any member of the Armed Forces of the United States or their spouse who has teaching experience in another state and has transferred to Missouri.
- b. Completed the required beginning teacher assistance program and participated in two (2) years of mentoring (Section 168.400.4, RSMo) The mentoring and beginning teacher assistance program do not apply to any teacher with prior teaching experience or to those in a position where this is not required.
- c. Performed at an acceptable level or above on all criteria on the most recent final evaluation instrument of the performance-based teacher evaluation process. The local evaluation process must be fully aligned with the Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation (5 CSR 20-400.375).
- d. Be serving on not less than a regular length full-time contract.
- e. Professional certification in a subject area for each participating teacher.

Developed a Career Ladder Development Plan (CDP) that contains responsibilities or volunteer efforts that the educator will complete to receive his/her Career Ladder supplemental pay. The educator will complete one or more responsibilities or volunteer efforts by May 31, 2027. The district shall ensure that a minimum of seventy-five (75) clock hours are completed for Stage II and that these hours be completed outside of the duties that require a teaching certificate under section 168.021 RSMo. This requirement should coincide with the standard* and be commensurate and adjustable to the compensation offered for Stage II. The educator shall relate each responsibility to an identified plan or other instructional improvement.

Eligible educators in Stage III of the XYZ School District shall:

- a. Completed five (5) years of teaching experience in Missouri public schools, except for any member of the Armed Forces of the United States or their spouse who has teaching experience in another state and has transferred to Missouri.
- b. Completed the required beginning teacher assistance program and participated in two (2) years of mentoring (Section 168.400.4, RSMo). The mentoring and beginning teacher assistance program do not apply to any teacher with prior teaching experience or to those in a position where this is not required.
- c. Performed at an acceptable level or above on all criteria on the most recent final evaluation instrument of the performance-based teacher evaluation process. The local evaluation process must be fully aligned with the Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation (5 CSR 20-400.375).
- d. Be serving on not less than a regular length full-time contract.
- e. Professional certification in a subject area for each participating teacher.
- f. Developed a Career Ladder Development Plan (CDP) that contains responsibilities or volunteer efforts that the educator will complete to receive his/her Career Ladder supplemental pay. The educator will complete one or more responsibilities or volunteer efforts by May 31, 2027. The district shall ensure that a minimum of one hundred (100) clock hours are completed for Stage III and that these hours be completed outside of the duties that require a teaching certificate under section 168.021 RSMo. This requirement should coincide with the standard* and be commensurate and adjustable to the compensation offered for Stage III. The educator shall relate each responsibility to an identified plan or other instructional improvement.

- IV. The DCLP shall clearly state that approved responsibilities or voluntary efforts are commensurate and adjustable to the compensation offered for that stage and should be outside of the duties that require a teaching certificate under section 168.021 RSMo, or other such professional certificate or license. Duties that require a professional certificate include typical teaching and other professional duties inclusive of the professional contract. Responsibilities or volunteer efforts shall be detailed in the teacher's Career Ladder Development Plan (see Appendix C). Teachers on each stage of**

the Career Ladder Plan will complete a required minimum number of clock hours of effort:

- a. Stage I – fifty (50) clock hours**
- b. Stage II – seventy-five (75) clock hours**
- c. Stage III – one hundred (100) clock hours**

Eligible teachers participating in the Career Ladder Grant Program of the XYZ School District shall complete a minimum of clock hours in one or more responsibilities or volunteer efforts. XYZ School District teachers will complete:

- a. At least fifty (50) clock hours for those teachers in Stage I
- b. At least seventy-five (75) clock hours for those teachers in Stage II
- c. At least one hundred (100) clock hours for those teachers in Stage III

XYZ School district teachers participating in the Career Ladder Grant Program shall complete a minimum of the required hours on responsibilities or voluntary efforts in one of the following areas:

- a. Serving in teacher externships as provided in Section 168.025, RSMo;
- b. Serving as a coach, supervisor, or organizer of any extracurricular activities for which the teacher does not already receive additional compensation;
- c. Serving as a mentor or cooperating teacher for new teachers for which the teacher does not already receive additional compensation;
- d. Serving as a mentor for students or teachers, whether in a formal or informal capacity;
- e. Providing high-quality tutoring or additional learning opportunities to students;
- f. Assisting students with postsecondary education preparation including, but not limited to, teaching an ACT or SAT preparation course or assisting students with completing college or career school admission or financial assistance applications;
- g. Receiving additional teacher training, coursework (recommended: 1 credit hour of coursework = 15 Career Ladder hours), or certification outside of that offered by the school district (i.e. National Board Certification); or
- h. Other (the responsibility or voluntary effort should directly and obviously relate to improved programs and services for students as outlined in the District School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, Missouri School Improvement Program, or instructional improvement and is an additional responsibility or voluntary effort extending beyond or in addition to those duties that require a teaching certificate).

If a participating educator is unable to complete the required 100 hours at Stage III, a school district may elect to pay them at Stage II or Stage I based on the hours they complete. If a participating educator is unable to complete the required 75 hours at Stage II, a school district may elect to pay them at Stage I based on the hours they complete.

- V. The DCLP shall provide a description of teacher, administrator, and patron involvement in the development of the DCLP. The patron should be someone who is not a staff member of the district. This may include a parent, board member, or community member among others.**

The XYZ School District teachers selected five teachers, two administrators, one parent, and one board member to serve on a working group that developed the XYZ School District's DCLP. This working group gathered feedback on the draft of the DCLP and made appropriate revisions before it was presented to the local school board for approval.

VI. The DCLP shall contain provisions for the assessment of the district's Career Ladder.

The XYZ School District has created a Career Ladder Program assessment committee. This committee consists of appropriate district personnel. This committee will annually assess the success of the DCLP. They will report to the board each year at the regular May board meeting regarding the benefits for school and students, and teacher interest and participation. In addition, the XYZ School District will report data on their Career Ladder Grant Program to the department each year to be used in the Career Ladder Report. Information reported to the department upon request may include but not be limited to

- a. Total number of teachers participating at each stage
- b. Final total state contribution
- c. Final total local contribution
- d. Total hours of teacher participation in these categories
 - Participating in teacher externships as provided in Section 168.025, RSMo;
 - Serving as a coach, supervisor, or organizer of any extracurricular activities for which the teacher is not already receiving compensation;
 - Serving as a mentor or cooperating teacher for new teachers for which the teacher is not already receiving compensation;
 - Serving as a mentor for students or teachers, whether in a formal or informal capacity;
 - Providing high-quality tutoring or additional learning opportunities to students;
 - Assisting students with postsecondary education preparation including, but not limited to, teaching an ACT or SAT preparation course or assisting students with completing college or career school admission or financial assistance applications;
 - Receiving additional teacher training, coursework (recommended: 1 credit hour of coursework = 15 Career Ladder hours), or certification outside of that offered by the school district (i.e. National Board Certification); or
 - Other (with the description of how this responsibility or voluntary effort directly and obviously relates to the improvement of programs and services for students as outlined in the District School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, Missouri School Improvement Program, or instructional improvement).
- e. Overall annual retention rates of participating teachers, as well as overall district teacher retention. This data is used to determine the impact of the Career Ladder Program on improving teacher retention in Missouri.

VII. The DCLP shall contain procedures for appealing decisions made regarding approval or denial of application and placement on the Career Ladder, including the right to substantive and procedural appeals of the local teacher evaluation process.

Any XYZ School District educator who is denied participation in the Career Ladder Program

due to a determination from the performance-based evaluation process or a determination that they have not met the requirements for participation will have the option to appeal that determination. The appeal procedure shall include:

- a. An opportunity to have the decision reviewed by the superintendent of schools of the XYZ School District; and
- b. An opportunity to have the decision rendered by the superintendent reviewed by the local board of education for the XYZ School District.

Appeal procedures shall be implemented in a timely fashion. All decisions made with respect to a teacher's application to and placement on any stage of the Career Ladder shall be based on the qualifications for that stage as stated in this XYZ School District Career Ladder Plan.

VIII. The DCLP shall contain provisions for recognition of teacher mobility from one district to another within the state.

An educator entering the XYZ School District may apply to participate in any Career Ladder stage for which he/she is qualified based on total years of experience in a Missouri public school.

[Note: Districts may choose to add timelines and other details to their plans. School districts may also elect for educators to be paid at a lesser stage if they were unable to complete the required minimum hours.]

* The Career Ladder Grant Program Standard is:

STAGE	DOLLARS	HOURS	MINIMUM # OF RESPONSIBILITIES
Stage I	\$1,500	50	1
Stage II	\$3,000	75	1
Stage III	\$5,000	100	1

The minimum number of responsibilities or volunteer efforts and the minimum number of clock hours must be met for a teacher to be eligible under the Career Ladder Grant Program.

Appendix B: Qualifications, Responsibilities, and Volunteer Efforts

The Missouri Career Ladder Grant Program

Qualifications, Responsibilities and Volunteer Efforts Summary (revised August 2022)

Participation in the Career Ladder is voluntary for school districts and for individual educators. The years of required experience do not apply to any member of the Armed Forces of the United States or their spouse who has teaching experience in another state and has transferred to Missouri.

Stage I (\$1,500 maximum)		Stage II (\$3,000 maximum)		Stage III (\$5,000 maximum)	
Qualifications		Qualifications		Qualifications	
- Completed two (2) years of teaching experience in Missouri public schools, except for any member of the Armed Forces of the United States or their spouse who has teaching experience in another state and has transferred to Missouri. - Completed the required beginning teacher assistance program and participated in two (2) years of mentoring (Section 168.400.4, RSMo) The mentoring and beginning teacher assistance program do not apply to any teacher with prior teaching experience or to those in a position where this is not required. - Performed at an acceptable level or above on all criteria on the most recent final evaluation instrument of the performance-based teacher evaluation process. The local evaluation process must be fully aligned with the Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation (5 CSR 20-400.375). - Be serving on not less than a regular length full-time contract. - Professional certification in a subject area for each participating teacher. - Develop a Career Development Plan (CDP) that contains responsibilities or volunteer efforts that the educator will complete to receive his/her Career Ladder supplemental pay. The educator will complete one or more responsibilities or volunteer efforts by May 31, 2027. The district shall ensure that a minimum of fifty (50) clock hours are completed for Stage I, and that these hours be completed outside of the duties that require a teaching certificate under section 168.021 RSMo. This requirement should coincide with the standard* and be commensurate and adjustable to the compensation offered for Stage I. The educator shall relate each responsibility to an identified plan or other instructional improvement.		- Completed three (3) years of teaching experience in Missouri public schools, except for any member of the Armed Forces of the United States or their spouse who has teaching experience in another state and has transferred to Missouri. - Completed the required beginning teacher assistance program and participated in two (2) years of mentoring (Section 168.400.4, RSMo) The mentoring and beginning teacher assistance program do not apply to any teacher with prior teaching experience or to those in a position where this is not required. - Performed at an acceptable level or above on all criteria on the most recent final evaluation instrument of the performance-based teacher evaluation process. The local evaluation process must be fully aligned with the Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation (5 CSR 20-400.375). - Be serving on not less than a regular length full-time contract. - Professional certification in a subject area for each participating teacher. - Develop a Career Development Plan (CDP) that contains responsibilities or volunteer efforts that the educator will complete to receive his/her Career Ladder supplemental pay. The educator will complete one or more responsibilities or volunteer efforts by May 31, 2027. The district shall ensure that a minimum of seventy-five (75) clock hours are completed for Stage II, and that these hours be completed outside of the duties that require a teaching certificate under section 168.021 RSMo. This requirement should coincide with the standard* and be commensurate and adjustable to the compensation offered for Stage II. The educator shall relate each responsibility to an identified plan or other instructional improvement.		- Completed five (5) years of teaching experience in Missouri public schools, except for any member of the Armed Forces of the United States or their spouse who has teaching experience in another state and has transferred to Missouri. - Completed the required beginning teacher assistance program and participated in two (2) years of mentoring (Section 168.400.4, RSMo) The mentoring and beginning teacher assistance program do not apply to any teacher with prior teaching experience or to those in a position where this is not required. - Performed at an acceptable level or above on all criteria on the most recent final evaluation instrument of the performance-based teacher evaluation process. The local evaluation process must be fully aligned with the Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation (5 CSR 20-400.375). - Be serving on not less than a regular length full-time contract. - Professional certification in a subject area for each participating teacher. - Develop a Career Development Plan (CDP) that contains responsibilities or volunteer efforts that the educator will complete to receive his/her Career Ladder supplemental pay. The educator will complete one or more responsibilities or volunteer efforts by May 31, 2027. The district shall ensure that a minimum of one hundred (100) clock hours are completed for Stage III, and that these hours be completed outside of the duties that require a teaching certificate under section 168.021 RSMo. This requirement should coincide with the standard* and be commensurate and adjustable to the compensation offered for Stage III. The educator shall relate each responsibility to an identified plan or other instructional improvement.	
Responsibilities		Responsibilities		Responsibilities	
Eligible teachers participating in the Career Ladder Grant Program of the XYZ School District shall complete a minimum of fifty (50) clock hours in on responsibilities or voluntary efforts in one of the following areas: - Serving in teacher externships as provided in Section 168.025, RSMo; - Serving as a coach, supervisor, or organizer of any extracurricular activities for which the teacher does not already receive additional compensation; - Serving as a mentor or cooperating teacher for new teachers for which the teacher does not already receive additional compensation; - Serving as a mentor for students or teachers, whether in a formal or informal capacity; - Providing high-quality tutoring or additional learning opportunities to students; - Assisting students with postsecondary education preparation including, but not limited to, teaching an ACT or SAT preparation course or assisting students with completing college or career school admission or financial assistance applications; - Receiving additional teacher training, coursework (recommended: 1 credit hour of coursework = 15 Career Ladder hours), or certification outside of that offered by the school district (i.e. National Board Certification); or - Other (the responsibility or voluntary effort should directly and obviously relate to improved programs and services for students as outlined in the District School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, Missouri School Improvement Program, or instructional improvement and is an additional responsibility or voluntary effort extending beyond or in addition to those duties that require a teaching certificate).		Eligible teachers participating in the Career Ladder Grant Program of the XYZ School District shall complete a minimum of seventy-five (75) clock hours in on responsibilities or voluntary efforts in one of the following areas: - Serving in teacher externships as provided in Section 168.025, RSMo; - Serving as a coach, supervisor, or organizer of any extracurricular activities for which the teacher does not already receive additional compensation; - Serving as a mentor or cooperating teacher for new teachers for which the teacher does not already receive additional compensation; - Serving as a mentor for students or teachers, whether in a formal or informal capacity; - Providing high-quality tutoring or additional learning opportunities to students; - Assisting students with postsecondary education preparation including, but not limited to, teaching an ACT or SAT preparation course or assisting students with completing college or career school admission or financial assistance applications; - Receiving additional teacher training, coursework (recommended: 1 credit hour of coursework = 15 Career Ladder hours), or certification outside of that offered by the school district (i.e. National Board Certification); or - Other (the responsibility or voluntary effort should directly and obviously relate to improved programs and services for students as outlined in the District School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, Missouri School Improvement Program, or instructional improvement and is an additional responsibility or voluntary effort extending beyond or in addition to those duties that require a teaching certificate).		Eligible teachers participating in the Career Ladder Grant Program of the XYZ School District shall complete a minimum of one hundred (100) clock hours in on responsibilities or voluntary efforts in one of the following areas: - Serving in teacher externships as provided in Section 168.025, RSMo; - Serving as a coach, supervisor, or organizer of any extracurricular activities for which the teacher does not already receive additional compensation; - Serving as a mentor or cooperating teacher for new teachers for which the teacher does not already receive additional compensation; - Serving as a mentor for students or teachers, whether in a formal or informal capacity; - Providing high-quality tutoring or additional learning opportunities to students; - Assisting students with postsecondary education preparation including, but not limited to, teaching an ACT or SAT preparation course or assisting students with completing college or career school admission or financial assistance applications; - Receiving additional teacher training, coursework (recommended: 1 credit hour of coursework = 15 Career Ladder hours), or certification outside of that offered by the school district (i.e. National Board Certification); or - Other (the responsibility or voluntary effort should directly and obviously relate to improved programs and services for students as outlined in the District School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, Missouri School Improvement Program, or instructional improvement and is an additional responsibility or voluntary effort extending beyond or in addition to those duties that require a teaching certificate).	

Appendix C: Model Career Ladder Development Plan for Teachers

Career Ladder Development Plan for Teachers

Name: _____

QUALIFICATIONS

	Stage I: Two years' teaching experience (50 hours) (select one stage)
	Stage II: Three years' teaching experience (75 hours) (select one stage)
	Stage III: Five years' teaching experience (100 hours) (select one stage)
	Regular length, Full-Time Contract (required)
	Professional Certification (required)
	Acceptable performance as determined by the district's performance-based teacher evaluation process (required)

RESPONSIBILITIES OR VOLUNTARY EFFORTS (select all that apply)

	Participating in teacher externships as provided in section 168.025, RSMo.
	Serving as a coach, supervisor, or organizer of any extracurricular activities for which the teacher does not already receive additional compensation.
	Serving as a mentor or cooperating teacher for new teachers for which the teacher does not already receive additional compensation.
	Serving as a mentor for students, whether in a formal or informal capacity.
	Providing high quality tutoring or additional learning opportunities to students.
	Assisting students with postsecondary education preparation including, but not limited to, teaching an ACT or SAT preparation course or assisting students with completing college or career school admission or financial assistance applications.
	Receiving additional teacher training, coursework (recommended: 1 credit hour of coursework = 15 Career Ladder hours), or certification outside of that offered by the school district (i.e. National Board Certification).
	Other (with description of how this responsibility or voluntary effort directly and obviously relates to the improvement of programs and services for students as outlined in the District School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, Missouri School Improvement Program or instructional improvement.

I certify that the above named educator meets all requirements for participation on the Career Ladder Stage indicated.

Administrator Signature

Date

Appendix D: Activities Inappropriate for the Career Ladder Program

The following are **examples** of activities that are not acceptable responsibilities or voluntary efforts as they are not in keeping with the intention of the Career Ladder statute, which is additional services that benefit students for additional compensation. **THIS LIST IS NOT ALL INCLUSIVE.**

- Writing lesson plans, instructional units or designing appropriate learning experiences for students in his/her classroom or team that are part of a teacher's regular contractual responsibility for implementing the district's curriculum and to design appropriate learning experiences for the students in his/her classroom or team or a part of a teacher's typically contracted duties
- Preparation for or participation in Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) meetings
- Tutoring cannot include open gym, study hall, detention, and/or any duties that require a teaching certificate
- Community activities that do not include students or the improvement or programming for students.
- Community activities that include students but are not academic in nature and directly and obviously relate to the improvement of programs and services for students
- Taking tickets, time keeping, score keeping, and attending school functions
- Any activity that is part of the educator's duties that require a teaching or other professional certificate
- Any activity for which the educator is already receiving compensation regardless of the source of that compensation
- Any Church affiliated activity
- Painting classrooms or other school beautification projects
- Attending a workshop or conference is not adequate. In addition to attendance, a participant should find a way to report (written or oral) and share with co-workers ideas, teaching strategies, content updates, etc., acquired at the professional meeting.
 - Being a presenter is sufficient.

NOTE: The educator should be an ACTIVE participant in the planning and execution of approved activities. Supervision or attendance alone is not adequate.

Appendix E: District Career Ladder Application

[Compliance Plans - LEA Home >](#)

District Career Ladder Plan Application

Application Status: **In Progress**

Participation

Number of Teachers - Enter number of teachers participating in District Career Ladder Plan for next school year.

Career Ladder Stage	Number of Teachers
Stage I	0
Stage II	0
Stage III	0

Will your district offer Career Ladder participants the traditional amounts of \$1500, \$3000, and \$5000 for Stage I, II, and III?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If not, what will be the amount? Stage I Stage II Stage III

Upload Required Files

Required File	Upload New File	Date Uploaded	View File	Delete File
District Career Ladder Plan	Choose File No file chosen 	---	---	N/A

Summary Review

State Grant	District Local Match
\$900.00	\$600.00

District Approval

The district agrees to comply with the Department's rules and regulations regarding the Career Ladder Program and understands the obligation to pay the district's portion of the Career Ladder match.

Date Career Ladder Plan Approved by District Board of Education

Email address to receive status change notifications.

Submit Application